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SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 10 MFA PRESS BRIEFING: SECRETARY VISIT, MIDDLE EAST POLICY, HUMAN RIGHTS, ITALY AWARD FOR DALAI LAMA, CHINA-CANADA RELATIONS

11. Key points at the February 10 MFA Press Briefing:

- China hopes Secretary Clinton's visit will "strengthen dialogue, increase mutual trust, broaden cooperation and push China-U.S. relations on a track of healthy and stable development."
- China "hopes U.S. Middle East policy can help ease tensions in the region to promote Middle East peace process."
- China is "committed to the protection and promotion of human rights" and has made "unremitting efforts" toward the development of human rights in China.
- Italy's decision to grant the Dalai Lama an award "seriously hurts the feelings of the Chinese people."
- China is "extremely concerned about Canada's behavior" regarding the case of Lai Changxing, a Chinese citizen accused of smuggling.

Secretary Clinton's Visit to China

12. China hopes for a "deep exchange of views" on "bilateral relations, the international financial crisis as well as other international and regional issues of mutual interest" during Secretary of State Clinton's February 20-22 visit said spokesperson Jiang Yu at the February 10 MFA press conference. Jiang said the visit will "strengthen dialogue, increase mutual trust, broaden cooperation and push China-U.S. relations on a track of healthy and stable development." The spokesperson noted that the trip will be Secretary Clinton's "first visit to China as Secretary of State" and is an "important high-level visit."

U.S. Iran Policy

13. Asked whether China supports President Obama's recent statements on Iran, Jiang said that China "hopes U.S. Middle East policy can help ease tensions in the region to promote the Middle East peace process."

UN Human Rights Council Country Review

14. China is "committed to the protection and promotion of human rights" and has made "unremitting efforts" toward the development of human rights in China. Chinese citizens currently enjoy "extensive rights and freedoms," however "China is currently at the preliminary stages of socialism" and therefore human rights in China "faces many

difficulties, challenges and shortcomings." China has also "adopted a positive attitude toward international cooperation on human rights." China has "signed 25 human rights agreements" and "held more than 70 human rights dialogues with nearly 20 countries and regions," noted Jiang. China is "willing to continue to engage in constructive dialogue" on human rights, said Jiang.

Italian Award for Dalai Lama

15. Italy's decision to grant the Dalai Lama an award "seriously hurts the feelings of the Chinese people" and China "expresses its strong dissatisfaction and protest" said Jiang. China "hopes Italy will pay attention to China's concerns and take immediate, effective measures to remove the negative impact and maintain healthy, stable development of bilateral ties." Jiang added that "over recent decades" the "Dalai Lama has clearly demonstrated what type of person he is." The Dalai Lama is "not simply a religious figure" but has engaged in "splittist and political activities for a long time."

Lai Changxing Case

16. China is "extremely concerned about Canada's behavior" regarding the case of Lai Changxing, a Chinese citizen accused of smuggling and recently granted a work permit by Canada. Jiang said that the Chinese Government is "unwavering and consistent" in its position that "fugitive Lai Changxing return to face trial under Chinese law." Jiang added that China has "already made serious representations to the Canadian side."

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Hu Jintao Africa and Saudia Arabia Trip

17. Asked about President Hu Jintao's trip to Mali, Senegal, Tanzania and Mauritius, Jiang said that the purpose of the trip is to strengthen cooperation and bilateral relations with each country. Hu "will sign some agreements" during the visits, said Jiang. Energy cooperation with African countries "follows the principle of win-win" and can help Africa "build an oil-based industrial system" and "enhance capacity for self-development." Regarding Hu's recently completed trip to Saudia Arabia, Jiang said that China "pays great attention to Saudi Arabia's position and role in the energy world and is willing to increase energy cooperation further."

China-France Relations

18. China hopes that France will "attach great importance to China's core concern" and work positively to "get China-France relations back on track." Jiang said that former French Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin will visit China from February 18-14 during which time he will meet with Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao, Vice Foreign Minister Li Hui and Vice Director of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee International Liaison Department Zhang Zhijun. Raffarin is "an old friend of China" and China hopes his visit "will enhance the China-France friendship." China attaches great importance to relations with France and healthy relations are conducive to peace and stability, said Jiang.

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